

Figures 1 and 2 show a fixed connection between the ratchet handle and the extension and shaft, while Figures 3, 4a, and 4b show a removable configuration which, for illustration purposes, includes threaded connections. In addition, please see lines 124 through 129 which sets forth a description of a removable or detachable ratchet extension. Further, in lines 129 through 139, specific embodiments of detachable drive extensions are set forth.

With regard to paragraph 6 and the rejection of claims 1 through 11, it is respectfully suggested that the specification describes ratchet extension 102 commencing on line 96 in the specification, which encloses the ratchet extension shaft 202 as described in Figure 1 and set forth beginning at line 102 in the specification, the relationship is further illustrated in Figures 2, 3, 4a, and 4b in which the ratchet extension shaft is shown enclosed by various embodiments of ratchet extension 102. For instance, in the case of Figure 2, ratchet extension 102 is fixedly attached to ratchet handle 101 at ratchet head 103. Figure 3 illustrates the extended ratchet extension embodied in this invention enclosing ratchet extension shaft 202. Figure 4a illustrates ratchet extension 303 which is removably attached to ratchet handle 101 on one end and ratchet head 103 at the other, and Figure 4b which shows the extension 303 and ratchet extension 202 removably attached to ratchet handle 101, but fixedly attached to ratchet head 103. Please also see the description commencing at line 135 in the specification which describes the drive mechanism, setting forth a slot and tang drive shaft arrangement, which transmits the rotation of the drive motor to drive the rotation of socket mount 104.

In response to the rejection of claims 1 through 11 in paragraph 7, the present invention is intended to be an improvement upon power assisted lever on ratchets, with the improvement comprising a substantial increase in the overall separation between the ratchet head and ratchet handle which is accomplished by the use of an elongated ratchet extension element and an enclosed ratchet extension shaft. The description and definition of a power assisted lever arm ratchet is set forth in the specification commencing in the description of the prior art beginning on line 8 in the specification and continuing beginning on line 21 with a description of the existing prior art with reference to a list of commercial products, all of which embody the elements of the power-assisted lever arm ratchet through lines 37 in the specification. In addition, in the attachment to information disclosure citation, there are three sheets illustrating conventional power-assisted lever arm ratchets and their manufacturers, and thirteen sheets showing power-assisted lever arm ratchets from essentially all of the major manufacturers. It is the substantial elongation of the separation between the ratchet head and handle that comprises the improvement of this invention, as previously indicated.

In response to the rejection in paragraph 9 of claims 1, 3, 7, 9, and 11 under 35 USC 102(b) citing Lampke, US Patent Number 2,808,749, it is respectfully suggested that while Lampke has essentially all of the features in a power-assisted level arm ratchet, the teaching in Lampke, as set forth in section one, lines 22, 34, and 35, as well as section two, line 55, all specifically refer to shortening the wrench. This teaching is completely opposite to the elongated structure of the improvement claimed in the present invention.

With respect to the further rejection in paragraph 10 of the foregoing claims pursuant to 35 USC 102(b), as being anticipated by the applicant's admitted prior art, it is respectfully suggested that all of the prior art show close coupling between a ratchet handle and head providing for a "compact" power-assisted ratchet, essentially consistent with the teachings in Lampke cited above. None of the prior art, in spite of the existence of these types of power-assisted lever arm ratchets for periods in excess of 50 years teach or suggest that an improvement, which is the subject of this present invention, that is the substantial extension of the distance between the handle and the ratchet head.

In response to the further rejection in paragraph 11 of claim 1 as being anticipated by D'Haem, et al., US Patent Number 4,791,836, here again what is disclosed is a compact, closely-coupled handle and drive head with no teaching of any benefit of separating or lengthening the distance between the ratchet head and handle.

In response to the further rejection in paragraph 12 of claim 12 under 35 USC 102(b) being anticipated by Hendrickson, US Patent Number 3,430,510, it is respectfully traversed. The teachings in Hendrickson as set forth in section four, lines 52 through 56, describe the use of power source 48 which, as shown and described in Hendrickson, is a closely-coupled power-assisted lever arm ratchet. Furthermore, the teachings in Hendrickson are directed toward providing a high-torque device incorporating a worm gear for the purposes of durability and, for severe applications, as set forth in section one, lines 71 and following onto section two to line 6. It then further describes the benefits of the Hendrickson invention because it is essentially a torque-limiting tool driven by a conventional lever arm power-assisted ratchet as set forth in

section two commencing on line 6 and through line 10. These teachings are further set forth in column two, commencing in line 50 and through line 71, and column three at lines 1 through 4. In addition, as shown in the illustrations in Hendrickson, the "extension" is not co-axial with but perpendicular to the handle of the "power source." There is nothing in Hendrickson, it is respectfully suggested, to teach or suggest the improvement embodied in the present invention, namely the substantial increase in the separation between the handle and drive head of the power-assisted lever arm ratchet.

With reference in paragraph 13 in the further rejection of claims 1, 3, 7, 9, and 11 as being anticipated by Pijamowski, US Patent Number 5,967,002, it is respectfully traversed. It is respectfully suggested that all that Pijamowski teaches is the use of a ratchet with a head that rotates uni-directionally and is adapted to accept the male end of the sockets and further provides for clockwise and counterclockwise rotation by inserting the socket on either one or the other face of the ratchet. Nothing in Pijamowski teaches or suggests the use of an extension separating the ratchet handle from the drive head as claimed in this invention.

In response to the rejection in paragraph 15 of claims 2, 4, 8 and 10, under 35 U.S.C. 103 (b) as being unpatentable over any one of Lampke, AAPA, D'Haem, et al, Hendrickson and Pijamowski, the rejection is respectfully traversed. The bases upon which the decision In re Stevens, 101USPQ (CCPA 1954) reached its decision included the following findings; many of the arts showed a common use of the universal connection that was the subject of the rejected claims and the recognition that the need for adjustment in a fishing rod is something according to the record that has long been recognized as desirable. In this case we have essentially the opposite underpinning,

namely the prior art is devoid of the showing of the use of an extension to increase the separation between the ratchet handle and head to provide the benefit achieved when this configuration is used with power assisted lever arm ratchets. It is also further suggested that because of the absence of this configuration in power assisted lever arm ratchets for a period in excess of 50 years it certainly cannot be said that this configuration had "long been recognized as desirable". The opposite inference I would respectfully suggest clearly more appropriate. When view from this perspective this feature of the present invention is not derived from "only routine skill in the art" but is in fact novel and unobvious.

In response to the rejection in paragraph 16 of claims 5 and 6 under 35 U. S. C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Lampke, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

First, as indicated above in response to the rejections in paragraph 9, there is no teaching of extending the length of the extension and drive shaft. Second, the subject matter of Bogli includes only lever on ratchets which are not powered and which operate by the manual application of pressure on the ratchet handle to rotate the ratchet assembly to tighten or loosen the object to which the ratchet is being applied. The purposes for which the various length handles are disclosed in Bogli are to change the length for the convenience of the user and consequentially change the leverage which influences the amount of torque that can be applied with the ratchet. Bogli provides a convenience for a user of the ratchet to use a shorter or longer handle with the same ratchet head as opposed to having several different lengths ratchets. In addition, Bogli postdates the filing date of April 24, 2001 of the instant application. It is respectfully suggested that this being the case that the art disclosed in Bogli not available as a

teaching to be applied in examining this application. In addition, in Bogli, the limitation described in column 6 line 5 describes the overall length of the handle which ranges from three inches (which as shown in Figure 1 includes only a handle without any extension) to eight inches. If the length of the handle, i.e. three inches is deducted from the maximum length of eight inches, the maximum length of any extension disclosed is five inches, thus there is no disclosure of extensions in the range of six to thirty inches.

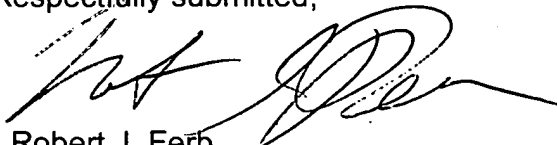
In further response to this office action, the inventors have submitted affidavits which set forth their understanding of the state of the art and the needs of the areas of activity to which this invention is applicable. In their affidavits there is the description of an unfulfilled need even though the power assisted lever arm ratchets have been extant for periods in excess of fifty years and have been produced in a very wide variety of forms none of which embody or even suggest the novel features of this invention. In further support of the assertion that this invention fulfills a substantial and unmet need is the portions of Mr. Boccadutre's affidavit which describe sales of thousands of these devices and the inclusion of this invention of the catalogues of major professional tool distributors. Although this invention appears to be deceptively simple in its structure, it is clear that a substantial need in a very prolific area of art went unfulfilled for decades before the conception of the present invention. Given these circumstances it is respectfully suggested that this invention meets the criteria for patentability.

It is respectfully suggested that the objections and rejections of the examiner have been met and overcome and the examiner's requirements have been incorporated into this amendment, it is respectfully requested that the rejections and objections be withdrawn and the application be passed to issue.

The fee required for the requested three month extension of \$475.00 has been submitted along with the petition for extension of time, no addition fee is due with this amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,



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